

INFORMATION REPORT INFORMATION REPORT

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY

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COUNTRY East Germany

SUBJECT Long-Distance Telecommunications
Office, East Berlin (Fernamt Gross-Berlin)

REPORT

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SOURCE EVALUATIONS ARE DEFINITIVE. APPRAISAL OF CONTENT IS TENTATIVE.

1. The Fernamt Gross-Berlin is located at Dottistrasse 12-16, Berlin-Lichtenberg, in a former post office. The following service bureaus belong to the Fernamt:

Telex-Amt, Berlin-Lichtenberg, Buchbergerstrasse - responsible for wireless telegraphy, teletype, and radio

Schnellamt (rapid service office) Gross-Berlin, Berlin W 8, Wilhelmstrasse - responsible for rapid communications in the Gross-Berlin area

Planning (Projektierung) Bureau; administrative offices are located at Magazinstrasse 7, Berlin C 2, and design offices at Reichstagufer, Berlin NW 7.

2. The Fernamt Gross-Berlin is under the Main Administration for Telecommunications Affairs of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and is composed of approximately 1200 persons, of which about 450 are telephone operators.
3. Principal officials of the Fernamt, as of 18 September 1959, were:

Chief
Deputy chief
Technical chief

Werner Schlenzig (SED)
Paul Rossignol (SED)
Max Schulz (SED)

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Deputy technical chief and head of Repeater Station	Stolze (fnu)
Personnel chief	Erna Englebrecht (SED)
Chief, Work Department	Elfriede Zimmermann
First BPO secretary	Guenther Kutz (SED)
First BGL representative	Lu Hoppe (SED)

4. The switchboards are located in two rooms; in the "old" room (alter Saal) there are 65 long distance switchboards, and in the "new" room (neuer Saal) 150. The four interzonal* lines and 20 switchboards for long-distance telephone calls are in the "new" room; eight switchboards for connections with foreign countries are installed in the two rooms.
5. Dresden, Halle, Leipzig, Magdeburg, and Schwerin are linked to the Fernamt Gross-Berlin by Sofort-Verkehr (no-delay traffic); this newly-instituted service involves a waiting period of from two to four hours, compared with the average waiting period of at least three hours for normal long-distance calls. The Sofort connections suffer from heavy interference, however. The capital cities of both eastern and western countries are directly connected for long-distance voice communications, and traffic moves with comparatively little trouble. While foreign long-distance telephone traffic is relatively good, the situation with regard to domestic traffic within Germany is chaotic.

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There is close surveillance, day and night, of all foreign and interzonal telephone calls; the Line Inspection Department (see paragraph 7 below) is responsible for this surveillance.

6. Chronic shortages exist in both materials and personnel. Cable lines are old and are no longer able to cope with the traffic. VEB Kabelwerk Koepenick and VEB Kabelwerk Oberspree are not able to supply new cable because of the permanent shortage of PVC (polyvinylchloride). The automation of long-distance communications, envisaged in future planning, and the inclusion of all of the larger East German cities in the Sofort-Verkehr net have little likelihood of being realized, since the chronic shortages of material make a rapid, uninterrupted development of work impossible. The personnel situation is equally critical. Telephone operators and technicians are in especially short supply, because of the low salaries paid. Telephone operators receive 310 DME per month (gross) and, as a result, there is a large turnover in operator personnel. In order to fill telephone operator positions, 16-year-old high school students have been hired, at 80 DME per month; however, they work for six months (apprentice and training period) and then leave for better-paying jobs in industrial enterprises.

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7. The Line Surveillance Department (Abteilung Leitungseüberwachung), which is directly subordinate to Deputy Chief Rossignol, is composed of about five persons, all of whom are SED members whose names, with one exception, are not known to the other Fernamt employees. The department is run by an employee of the Security Department of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications and representatives of the State Security Service (SSD) in Berlin-Lichtenberg; the Fernamt official responsible for this department is Rossignol. For security reasons, the location of the department is changed frequently; in September 1959 it was located on the third floor of the building. The area occupied by the department is restricted to members of the department only and is occupied day and night.
8. The Radio Department (Rundfunknotenamt) is the connecting office to the Funkhaus (radio house), Berlin-Oberschoeneweide, Nalepastrasse, and is the central office for all communications (Umschaltungen) of DDR-Sender transmissions. The following were officials in September:

Chief	Jochen Merkel (SED)
Deputy Chief	Horst Jentsch (no political affiliation)
Technical Chief	Alfred Sommerfeld (no political affiliation)
Chief of the Measurements Office	Wolfgang Tirpitz (SED)

The department is divided into the following:

- 1 bureau with about 8 employees; duties include charge calculations (foreign and domestic), recording of outgoing calls, personnel matters;
- 1 test office with two technical employees;
- 1 switching office (Schaltstelle) with about 20 employees who work in 4 shifts
- 2 monitoring booths (Ueberwachungskabinen) for purely technical monitoring of outgoing calls in connection with trouble-free operations

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- 1 switch area (Schaltraum)

The Radio Department has the only direct connection to

Western countries; incoming traffic from the West also routed over this line. Traffic from Soviet Bloc countries is routed by teletype (Springschreiber).

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9. Classified Lines

a. The following classified lines (Geheimleitungen)

Moscow - Leipzig	code number 1009
"X" - Burg (near Magdeburg)	code number 82036
Thaelmannplatz - Leipzig	code number ?
Peking - Berlin	code number ?

The line "X"- Burg is probably a direct line from the SED Central Committee to the military installations at Burg.

- b. All details concerning these cables are classified. There is a file card (Karteikarte) for each cable on which data on the direction, designation, and nature of the cable is entered. This information is only available to the chief of the radio department and the chief of the measurements office.
- c. Of especial importance is the direct line from Peking to Berlin via radio. In accordance with previous authorization from the Security Department of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications (exact details are communicated by telephone to the chief of the Radio Department), an intermediate connection for the ADN (East German press agency) can be made.

10. Radio Protector Stages (Funkschutzstufen)a. Funkschutzstufe I

This is put in operation in connection with original transmissions of speeches of foreign government leaders, (for example, the radio address of Khrushchev in East Berlin), or of East German government or SED Central Committee members; this also is utilized in all connections (Anschaltungen). These transmissions are made exclusively under the supervision of the Security Service of the Ministry of Post and Telecommunications, together with members of the State Security Service (SSD). These supervisory officials change constantly. Upon receipt of a telephone call from the chief of the Radio Department (Rundfunk-knotenamt), supervisory personnel appear and show either a red SSD permit (SSD-Ausweis) or a special permit card (Ausweiskarte) of the Ministry Security Service, which varies in color from the red of the SSD permit.

b. Funkschutzstufe B

This is adopted for band transmissions of speeches of members of the above-mentioned groups (Personenkreis). These transmissions take place under the supervision of Ministry Security Service employees only.

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11. Physical Security of the Enterprise:

The usual guard complement of the Fernamt Berlin includes about 8 postal employees who are on duty day and night at both exits. The building is also guarded by members of the Volkspolizei (VP). One VP officer and about 20 police from the Lichtenberg Polizei-Inspektion are on duty.

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